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MARINE CORPS CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS SCHOOL
WEAPONS TRAINING BATTALION
TRAINING COMMAND
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STUDENT OUTLINE

CMO SUPPORT TO COA DEVELOPMENT

CAC-PLAN-210

CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS PLANNER COURSE

M020AQD

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

a. **TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE**. Given a mission, commander's intent, CPB planning support products and as a member of a Civil-Military Operations Working Group, integrate Civil-Military considerations into the planning process, to support the commander's decision making by providing an understanding of the civil environment and the nature of the problem in order to identify an appropriate solution, in accordance with MCWP 3-33.1. (CAC-PLAN-2001)

b. **ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

   (1) Without the aid of references, define the purpose of the COA Development, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, Ch 3. (CAC-PLAN-2001m)

   (2) Without the aid of references, identify the COA Development injects, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, CH 3. (CAC-PLAN-2001n)

   (3) Without the aid of references, identify the COA Development activities, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, CH 3. (CAT-PLAN-2001o)

   (4) Without the aid of references, identify the COA Development results, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, CH 3. (CAC-PLAN-2001p)

   (5) Given a planning scenario, mission statement, CMO COA supporting concept, and CMO tasks, develop a CA Team Supporting Concept brief, in accordance with PE Checklist. (CAC-PLAN-2001q)

1. **INTRODUCTION TO COURSE OF ACTION (COA) DEVELOPMENT**

    a. **Course of Action (COA) Defined**. There are minor differences between the joint and USMC definitions for Course of Action, but they have the same fundamental meanings:

        (1) JP 1-02 defines a COA as a sequence of activities or possible plan related to mission accomplishment.

        (2) MCWP 5-1 emphasizes that COA Development is about providing options for the Commander during the COA Development process, you will continue to refine the understanding of the problem. In the case of CMO, this means that the CPB process does not stop with Problem Framing.

    b. **Fundamental Questions**. There are four fundamental questions that must be answered during COA Development by the OPT. What do we want to do; how will it impact the civilian population; how will the civilian population impact the force; and how do we want to do it? The CMO Planner contributes by answering the questions, "How will we impact the civilian population?" And "How will the civilian population impact the force?"

2. **COA DEVELOPMENT INJECTS**. Essential to the COA Development step is the Mission Statement, Commander's Intent and Planning Guidance normally provided via a Warning Order carried forward from Problem Framing. In additional, it is important to begin the step with any adversary or civil updates to ensure that there is a common understanding of the IPB and CPB insights up to this point in the process.

    a. **Update IPB/CPB**. The COA Development process begins when the OPT reviews the existing S-2 IPB products produced during Problem Framing and any subsequent S-2 IPB updates. These products include a detailed analysis of terrain and the environment, focusing on opportunities and limitations imposed on the enemy by terrain and the environment.

        (1) The S-2 analyzes enemy weapons systems, capabilities, doctrine and intent. An Event Template is created that graphically depicts enemy COAs (in the form of Most Likely and Most Dangerous, but can also include Most Advantageous). OPTs need to focus on the Event Template to build their situational awareness of the enemy.

(2) Likewise the CMO Planner briefs the OPT on any updates to the civil dimension and civil aspects of the battlespace; this brief may also be given by a member of the CMO Working Group or by the Green Cell. CMO may have similar briefing templates for the civil dimension that focuses on leadership engagements, collection methods and sources of conflict and resiliencies.

b. **The Red Cell**. The Red Cell is convened during Problem Framing to further develop enemy COAs within the context of the OPT's plan. Red Cell input early on in the COA Development process is critical to maintain the OPT's focus on the enemy. A good Red Cell will force the OPT to concentrate more on developing strong COAs and to think beyond S-2 products. The Red Cell will cover the following:

(1) Threat Mission Statement. Develop enemy mission statement

(2) Threat COAs. Conduct detailed enemy COA Development

(3) Threat Capabilities. Analyze enemy capabilities

(4) Refine Threat Analysis. Refine S-2 Predictive Analysis

(5) DSM/DST Development. Help other members of the OPT produce a draft Decision Support Matrix and Decision Support Template

(6) War Game Preparation. Prepare to War Game ML/MD/MA COAs

c. **The Green Cell**. Likewise, the Green Cell is convened during Problem Framing to further develop civil environment and actions within the context of the OPTs plan. Civil environment input early on in the COA Development process is critical to ensure any COAs developed adequately reflects our effect on the civil environment, as well as the effect of the civil "Key Influences" (Individuals/groups, physical environment/ infrastructure, and cultural factors) on military operations.

d. **Updated Staff Estimate**. The updated CMO estimate feeds into COA Development by providing essential information on CA resources, key nodes, physical infrastructure, task organization and mission assignments.

3. **COA DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

    a. **Initial COA Development**. Once the IPB/CPB updates are presented, the OPT is ready to get to the core of COA Development, and create some initial COAs for the commander's review and guidance. These initial COAs will be refined as directed for the commander's approval. As a CMO Planner, you will be using the COA to begin determining your team supporting concept.

        (1) Battlespace Framework. In the planning guidance coming out of problem framing, the commander outlines key points on how he sees accomplishing the mission and solving the problem. This includes the Battlefield Framework: how the Commander will organize his Battlespace and Forces to achieve a decision. For a CMO Planner, this will begin to define team operating areas as well as the team command relationships to other units in the MAGTF. The battlefield can be viewed in a variety of ways, to include a spatial context, a purpose context, or in a Lines of Operation (LOO) framework.

            (a) Spatial Battlespace Framework. In a conventional operating environment, the battlespace is often described in spatial terms: close, deep, and rear. Typically, CA Teams would be operating in the "rear" portion of the battlespace, and not in the close and deep tactical fights.

            (b) Purpose Battlespace Framework. Activities in the battlespace can be described in terms of purpose: shaping actions (help set conditions for the decisive action(s)), the decisive action(s) (event or activity critical to mission success), and the sustaining actions that support shaping and decisive actions.

                1. CA teams may conduct actions to shape for or sustain the MAGTF decisive action(s), or in the case of an FHA mission, CA teams themselves may be conducting the MAGTF decisive action(s).

                2. In addition to purpose, friendly forces will often be designated in terms of effort: the Main and associated supporting efforts, as well as designating portions of the force as having reserve and security roles within the COA. A CA Team in a counterinsurgency environment may be the Supporting Effort to a Maneuver force that has been designated the Main Effort.

(c) <u>LOO Battlespace Framework</u>. Another way to organize battlespace and friendly forces, and a technique that is useful in less conventional conflict environments (to include FHA or HADR) is to organize along LOOs. This methodology focuses the effort on broad mission related objectives designed to achieve certain effects on the environment and adversary. Achieving these effects then leads to the commander's end state.

<u>1</u>. The Commander can focus the forces' efforts along lines of operation such as Governance, information operations, etc. These are then grouped into the four DIME (Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic) categories. To synchronize each LOO's purpose, develop an overall desired effect that the actions and tasks along each LOO aim for, and the achievement of these effects is designed to reach the commander's end state as described in the Commander's Intent.

<u>2</u>. MAGTF CA assets, like the remainder of the force, may be responsible for conducting actions along each of the force's Lines of Operation, and not just "CMO related" LOOs.

(2) <u>Determine Requirements</u>. After establishing the Battlespace Framework, the OPT will begin to determine the requirements to accomplish the Commander's end state. This is done by looking at the "generic" resources and capabilities (personnel, materiel, activities, etc) required in order to meet the Commander's end state in specific areas throughout the battlespace, and to support the rough cut scheme of maneuver and concept of operations. For CA Marines, the requirements take the form of "generic" Civil-Military Operations related resources and capabilities that must be employed throughout the battlespace.

(3) <u>Array Capabilities</u>. The OPT will then array known MAGTF and other available friendly capabilities (units, personnel, materiel) against the "generic" resource and capability requirements that were identified in the battlespace. This will include arraying CA teams as well as available interagency/interorganizational capabilities that may be leveraged by the MAGTF. Once MAGTF CMO/CA team assets and capabilities are arrayed against requirements, this will help identify CMO capability shortfalls.

(a) CMO Planners will attempt to eliminate or mitigate shortfalls to meet the COA requirements. Shortfalls that carry over into execution create some level of "risk" to successful mission accomplishment.

(b) CA Team leaders should be providing input to the MAGTF CMO Planner on CA Team potential shortfalls, as well as identifying possible ways to eliminate or mitigate these shortfalls.

(4) Convert Generic to Specific Units. In this portion of the step, CMO Planners must determine the specific units (dets/teams) that will be assigned to accomplish the tasks/objectives and meet CMO requirements. This normally begins with the CMO support to the COA's Main Effort, and then CMO support to each MAGTF Supporting Effort.

(5) Develop Control Measures. The OPT will determine overall control measures (boundaries, fire support measures, etc) that apply to all elements of the MAGTF. CMO Planners should consider the following civil environment "control measures" that may define how CA assets are employed at the tactical level:

(a) Political Boundary

(b) Refugee Areas

(c) Economic routes

(d) Key Infrastructure

(e) Shrines / Cultural areas

Some of these CA related control measures will be in the form of the "Key Influences" which were identified in the CPB process.

(6) Initial Task Organization. The OPT will develop an initial task organization that logically supports the Command and Control and other requirements for each COA. Normally the OPT looks two levels down from its echelon of command when developing a task organization. This effort is facilitated by the subordinate unit OPT representatives. CMO Planners will develop a task organization for their CA assets that logically supports the overall task organization and associated requirements. With a task organization, CA Marines will consider command and/or "supporting/supported" relationships for their teams and other assets in the force.

(7) Synchronize. The OPT will develop tasks for the elements of the MAGTF as well as tasks along functional lines (Fires, Maneuver, CMO, etc). The CMO Planner will shape the overall MAGTF CMO tasks, while the Civil Affairs Teams will develop team level tactical tasks that support the MAGTF CMO tasks. CMO Planners/CA Team leaders should ensure team tasks

are properly arranged in time, space, and purpose to support the overall MAGTF and MAGTF element efforts.

(a) This "rough cut" synchronization of tasks by both the OPT and MAGTF subordinate organizations provides the initial sequence of actions that make up a COA.

(b) Two basic tools are used to help synchronize the COA: The Synchronization Matrix, and the COA graphic and narrative. The CMO Planner, utilizing CA Team input, will represent CMO equities in building both of these products.

b. **Commander Input & COA Refinement**. After the OPT completes initial COA Development, the Commander will be briefed (usually informal) on each COA. This is often referred to as the "rough cut" COA brief. This is done to ensure that the options (COAs) presented are meeting the Commander's planning guidance, and to seek further guidance from the Commander in order to continue COA Development with any necessary refinement. While the OPT/S-9 have been working on the COAs/CMO supporting concept using the commander's COA Development guidance provided at the end of Problem Framing, the commander has continued to refine his understanding of the battlespace. This is normally, accomplished through a dialogue with his higher commander, as well as his own staff and subordinate commanders. This input can lead to changes or refinements of the commander's COA Development guidance.

c. **COA Graphic and Narrative**. Now that the OPT has received additional guidance from the commander, they further develop and refine the COAs to be approved for wargaming. OPT's develop a COA graphic and narrative to pictorially and verbally describe the key points of the COA (The graphic is a map chip, usually developed in C2PC). The OPT positions the forces and describes the efforts of these units during the operation. The narrative supports the graphic by describing the Main effort, supporting efforts, sustaining and reserve actions and end state. The location and actions of MAGTF CMO assets, to include the CA Teams may be included in the graphic and narrative.

d. **Refine Task Organization**. Each COA may have a different task organization. After refining the COAs, the OPT/CMO Working Group makes any task organizations refinements required to ensure that the force is constructed, sized, and resourced for success.

e. **Assign Command Relationships**. Along with refining the task organization, the OPT/CMO Working also ensures that command relationships between organizations are logical and help to optimize command and control of the force.

(1) CA Marines must understand the various doctrinal command relationships such as: **Tactical Control** (TACON) - Authority to give detailed direction and control of the movements or maneuver of attached or assigned forces and **Operational Control** (OPCON) - Authority to organize commands and forces and employ those forces as the commander considers necessary to accomplish assigned missions, etc.

(2) CA Marines should also know the doctrinal support relationships such as **Direct Support** - A mission requiring a force to support another specific force and authorizing it to answer directly to the supported force's request for assistance and, **General Support -** That support which is given to the supported force as a whole, etc.

(3) Command relationship must be clear and understood by those who they apply to; otherwise command relationships may become more personality driven than doctrinally sound, and lead to operational friction.

f. **COA Synchronization Matrix**. A Synchronization Matrix (Synch Matrix) is a decision support tool showing the activities and tasks of the command and subordinate elements over time. The Synch Matrix is the most important product coming out of COA Development, and each COA developed will have its own synchronization matrix. The matrix has the necessary level of detail that is required to conduct an effective COA War Game, and selected information from the matrix is carried into the order as the execution checklist, Annex X. In addition to the MAGTF level CMO activities and tasks, CA Team tactical tasks may be included in the MAGTF synchronization matrix, particularly in an FHA or other "CMO centric" mission.

g. **Decision Support Matrix**. The Decision Support Matrix is a planning support tool built during COA Development. This matrix is designed to identify major decision points during an operation that may require a Commander level decision, as well as the associated Named Areas of Interest (NAI) and Target Areas of Interest (TAI). It identifies each specific decision point, normally in chronological order. It will also include potential friendly actions/activities associated with a decision point; these could include CMO/CA Team specific actions/activities.

h. **Decision Support Template**. A Decision Support Template is a graphic representation of the Decision Support Matrix. It is often created to visually display the NAI and TAI locations in the battlespace that are associated with Decision Points. Both the Decision Support Matrix and Template will be modified as a result of information developed during the COA Wargame step, and included in the Operations Order.

i. **Develop Concepts Of Support**. Staff sections and functional area staff advocates are responsible for their own supporting concepts for each Course of Action that will be wargamed.

(1) Various functional area working groups supporting the staff and OPT will normally draft these supporting concepts. The CMO Working Group will develop the MAGTF CMO Supporting Concept with significant input from the CA Teams themselves.

(2) The supporting concept for the wargamed and approved COA will become the basis for the Concept of Support. The CMO Concept of Support will be contained in Annex G of the Operations Order, and summarized in paragraph 3b of the Basic Order.

j. **Staff Concept of Support Graphic**. A graphic/narrative format can be used by a CMO Working Group/CA Marine to depict a Concept of Support- the same information covered in a Concept of Support, use operational graphics on a map background, and describe our concept of support in a narrative using the "Task/Method/End state" model.

k. **Finalize Civil Actions**. The CMO Planner/CMO Working Group will review the CMO function of the COA and finalize the expected civil activities and actions for each COA. These civil activities cover the scope of physical environment, infrastructure, individuals/groups, and cultural factors revealed during the CPB process. It also focuses on the "Key Influences" that will likely have a significant impact on friendly actions and activities.

(1) Normally, this is a collaborative effort between the CMO Planner, CMO Working Group, CA Team, and the Green Cell as part of the CPB effort. The CMOWG in collaboration with the Green Cell will also determine Civil Most Likely and Civil Most Disadvantageous Reactions based on expected friendly and adversary actions.

(2) CA team leaders should contribute to building these products. The CA team leader will provide good tactical level insight, as well as draw from his local CPB efforts. In addition, a well-staffed Green Cell will have SME input from cultural "experts" and other sources to help develop these civil actions.

l. **Assessments**. An important but sometimes neglected element of COA Development is building an Assessment Plan. An assessment plan is critical for determining: That "the force is doing the right things for the right reasons in the right time frame" and are continuously confirming the "why" to tasks assigned to the force.

(1) CA Marines should understand how to evaluate team level activities as well as the effects of those activities on the civil environment. A typical framework used to evaluate and report the impact of friendly actions within an AO is based on Measures of Performance (MOPs) linked to Tasks, and Measures of Effect (MOEs) linked to desired Effects in the battlespace leading to the commander's End State. Whenever possible, CA Teams should provide input to developing MOPs and MOEs.

(2) The assessment plan should define the "how" and "who" of reporting. CA Marines should develop the Civil Information Management Plan (CIM) to support civil information related requirements in assessment. This can be done using unit/CA Team SITREP/SPOTREPS, as well as civil interaction data from SAF, KLEs, HUMINT and Civil Reconnaissance activities.

m. **COA Criteria Review**. Once COAs are finalized prior to wargamed, they are reviewed to ensure they meet the commander's guidance and satisfy the criteria filter "FASDC".

(1) F - Feasible: Does the COA accomplish the mission within the available time, space, and resources?

(2) A - Acceptable: Does the COA achieve an advantage that justifies the cost in resources?

(3) S - Suitable: Does the COA accomplish the purpose and tasks? Does it comply with Commander's Guidance?

(4) D - Distinguishable: Does the COA differ significantly from other COAs?

(5) <u>C – Complete</u>: Does the COA include all tasks to be accomplished? Does it describe a complete mission?

The OPT will then make any refinements or modifications required to meet the above criteria.

4. **<u>COA DEVELOPMENT RESULTS</u>**. At a minimum, results of COA Development include an updated/refined IPB and CPB, COA graphic and narratives, COA synchronization matrix, and functional supporting concepts for each COA. The OPT normally provides a brief to the commander on the COA Development results and major products.

    a. Before the OPT can begin the COA War Game, the commander must:

        (1) Designate COAs for wargaming

        (2) Provide wargame guidance and evaluation criteria

    b. The OPT and staff normally assist the commander in formulating this information, with the CMO Planner providing specific considerations from a civil environment perspective to both the wargame guidance and the evaluation criteria (CA teams should provide input to the CMO Planner on both these elements).

    c. COA wargame guidance assists CMO Planners/CA Marines in identifying what CA related actions and activities will be portrayed during the COA Wargame, to include those at the CA Team level. The Commander's Evaluation Criteria is the lens that is used to analyze and evaluate COAs. The Commander will have specific issues and questions which will need to be answered during the war game. CMO Planners should determine which elements of the Commander's Evaluation Criteria will require CMO related input.

<u>REFERENCES</u>:

Civil-Military Operations, JP 3-57
Marine Corps Planning Process, MCWP 5-1
MAGTF Civil Military Operations, MCWP 3-33.1
Civil Affairs Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures, MCRP 3-33.1A
Operational Terms and Graphics, MCRP 5-12A

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